

Module 128 to provide the disclosed process in a variety of ways. For example, step 412, for determining if message 405 contains a transaction ID, could be performed outside of Customization Module 128.

Referring to FIGS. 5A–5B, there are shown flow diagrams of a preferred embodiment of Customization Module 128. In this preferred embodiment, an alternative procedure can be used for registering subscriber profile data. When Message 500, received by Customization Module 128, is a customization message (502-Yes), the message is checked to see that it contains or otherwise specifies a subscriber and appropriate subscriber profile data (504). If the Message 500 is a customization message, then it should contain essential subscriber identification information (subscriber ID) such as a password, to gain access to the system. If insufficient subscriber identification information is provided in the message (504-No), it is rejected and the procedure terminates. If the subscriber ID specified by the message is invalid, the message is rejected (506-No). If the subscriber ID is valid (506-Yes) and the subscriber profile data within message 500 passes any syntax or other verifications at step 502, the subscriber profile data is stored 508, preferably in a supplemental storage area such as a database dedicated to pending customer profile updates and/or registration requests. Alternatively, the pending subscriber profile data could be stored in an extra field of the subscriber record.

The subscriber is optionally notified of pending customization updates by any one of several ways (510). For example, a “subscriber customization validation” or “subscriber registration validation” message could be left in a designated voice mail box or E-mail address that corresponds to the subscriber.

Referring to FIG. 5B, when a subscriber logs on to the enhanced service platform (512), the customization module determines whether a customization update is pending (520). If there is a pending customization update (520-Yes), the Customization Module notifies the subscriber of the pending customization update and requests authorization from the subscriber to process the pending customization update (522). If there is no pending customization update, access to other subscriber functions (532) is initiated. The subscriber responds, either verbally or by keypad and that response is received by the Customization Module (524). If the subscriber grants authorization (526-Yes), the customization data corresponding to the pending customization update is registered in the subscriber’s profile (528). If the subscriber does not grant permission (526-No), access to other subscriber functions (532) is initiated. A confirmation message is then sent to the subscriber’s E-mail address or voice mail (530).

The Database Record

Referring to FIG. 6A there is shown an embodiment of a database record 600. Database record 600 represents the data structure of a valid Message 405 (FIG. 4A). Database record 600 may include data such as a subscriber identification 602, a transaction ID 604, a time stamp 606, which represents the time when transaction ID 604 was generated, and one or more parameters 608 to be stored in the subscriber’s profile. Parameters 608 are subscriber related data such as an E-mail address indicating where incoming E-mail is to be forwarded, a pager telephone number, a fax number, a forwarding telephone number, etc.

Referring to FIG. 6B there is shown an embodiment of a database record 650. Database record 650 represents the data structure of a valid Message 500 (FIG. 5A). Database record

includes a subscriber identification 602 and one or more parameters 608 to be registered in the subscriber’s profile.

Unified E-mail Address

Another preferred embodiment of the present invention is drawn to the case in which customization request 410 (FIG. 4A) or customization message 502 (FIG. 5A) is an E-mail message. In this preferred embodiment, the E-mail address that is used by a subscriber to send customization messages to the customization module is the same E-mail address that has been assigned to the subscriber for general E-mail services. Thus, the subscriber does not have to remember both his general E-mail address and a “customization” address. When the Enhanced Service Platform 100 receives an E-mail message that is addressed to a subscriber, the Platform automatically determines whether the E-mail message is a customization message. If the E-mail message is not a customization message, it is forwarded to the subscriber’s in box with no further processing. Customization E-mail messages are processed by the Customization module 128 according to methods such as those described in FIGS. 4 and 5. The determination of whether an E-mail message is a customization message, to be processed by customization module 128, or just general content for the subscriber can be effected by any number of methods, including a special designation in the “subject” line of the E-mail message or by a particular tag present in the E-mail message.

Alternate Embodiments

The present invention can be implemented as a computer program product that includes a computer program mechanism embedded in a computer readable storage medium. For instance, the computer program product could contain the program modules and managers shown in FIG. 1. These program modules and managers may be stored on a CD-ROM, magnetic disk storage product, or any other computer readable data or program storage product. The software modules and managers in the computer program product may also be distributed electronically, via the Internet or otherwise, by transmission of a computer data signal (in which the software modules are embedded) on a carrier wave.

While the present invention has been described with reference to a few specific embodiments, the description is illustrative of the invention and is not to be construed as limiting the invention. Various modifications may occur to those skilled in the art without departing from the true spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for customizing a profile of a subscriber having access to a service platform comprising:

a subscriber service manager configured to receive a subscriber request at the service platform, the subscriber service manager upon receiving the subscriber request generating a transaction identifier, storing a copy of the transaction identifier, and communicating the transaction identifier to the subscriber; and

a customization module configured to receive and process a customization message sent to the system, the received customization message including subscriber profile data and a transaction identifier; the customization module, upon receipt of the customization message, comparing the transaction identifier in the received customization message with the copy of the transaction identifier stored by the subscriber service